

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office action mailed on January 14, 2004, the examiner allowed claims 14-21 and 24-26. Examiner rejected claims 22 and 23 of this application under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Bradley et al (USPN 5,396,572). Claims 1-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Bradley et al. The Examiner's comments have been carefully noted.

Applicants cancelled claim 1 and amended claims 2-12 to depend upon allowed independent claim 14.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 22 and 23 are rejected as anticipated by Bradley et al USPN 5,396,572 ('572). Anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102 requires that each and every claimed feature be disclosed by a single prior art reference. Applicants appreciate the time and consideration provided by Examiner in reviewing this application, however, respectfully traverse the rejection of the claims at least for the following reasons.

Claims 22 and 23 of the present application are directed not to a connector plug itself but to an assembling tool for positioning and holding elements of a connector plug, such as a ferrule, an optical cord and an optical cord fixing member, to each other. In other words, an invention recited in Claim 22 relates to the assembling tool to be used for bonding the ferrule at a position away from the optical cord fixing member by a predetermined interval. An invention recited in Claim 23 relates to the assembling tool to be used for caulking and securing the optical cord fixing member at a position away from the ferrule by a predetermined interval. Bradley et al. does not disclose or suggest the assembling tool as stated above, but merely teaches an optical connector itself as a finished product. Bradley et al. neither disclose nor suggest a function of spacing apart the ferrule and the optical cord fixing member at a predetermined interval. Also, Bradley et al. do not disclose holding the ferrule and the optical cord fixing member in a detachable manner. To clarify the subject matter of the application, applicants amended Claims 22 and 23 to add that: i) the optical cord fixing member holding means holds the optical cord fixing member in a detachable manner; and ii) the ferrule holding means holds the ferrule in a detachable manner. In making these revisions care has been taken to ensure that the claims remain supported by the specification and that no new matter has been added. The amendment is supported, for example by specification, page 65, line 6 through page 67, line 18, and by Fig. 22.

Accordingly, the assembling tools as claimed in currently amended Claims 22 and 23 are apparently different from the connector as a finished product disclosed in Bradley et al.

Therefore, applicants respectfully submit that the assembling tools claimed in Claims 22 and 23 are patentable over '572.

Rejection under 35 U. S. C. §103(a)

According to MPEP §706.02(j):

"To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness... the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all claim limitations. The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on the applicant's disclosure."

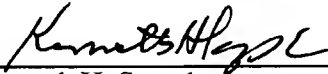
The claims 1-13 have been rejected based solely on Bradley et al.

Applicants deleted claim 1 and amended claims 2-13 to depend upon allowed claim 14. Therefore, is respectfully submitted the claims 2-13 comply with 35-U.S.C. § 103, and allowable in view of cited prior art.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance which allowance is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required in this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17 during its entire pendency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1135. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1135.

Respectfully submitted,
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